

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 NASA-04 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 DODE-00 L-03 USIE-00

PRS-01 PA-03 NSCE-00 NSC-10 SS-15 SAJ-01 ACDA-19

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1210

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PASS NASA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, UR

SUBJ: SOVIET RECOVERY OF NASA/ONR SCIENTIFIC BALLOON

REF: A. STATE 158829; B. MOSCOW 9383

1. SCIATT AUGUST 15 EXAMINED WRECKAGE OF RECOVERED BALLOON PAYLOAD, WHICH HAD BEEN SPREAD OUT ON FLOOR OF LOBBY OF ONE OF SIDE SERVICE ENTRANCES OF INSTITUTE OF SPACE RESEARCH. SOVIETS APPEAR TO HAVE EXERCISED GREAT FASTIDIOUSNESS IN RECOVERING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE AFTER CRASH OF BALLOON IN "REMOTE AND WILD" AREA OF EASTERN SIBERIA. PARTS OF PAYLOAD WERE SPREAD OVER SIGNIFICANT TERRITORY, APPARENTLY. FACT THAT EQUIPMENT WAS FOUND SO QUICKLY IN "WILD" AREA SUGGESTS THAT BALLOON HAD BEEN UNDER SURVEILLANCE AFTER ENTERING SOVIET AIRSPACE.

2. MOST OF EQUIPMENT IS NOT ONLY SEVERLY DAMAGED, BUT BROKEN INTO MANY PARTS. THERE IS ONE BOX OF ABOUT 25 TO 50 LOOSE CIRCUIT BOARDS, FOR EXAMPLE. IN ALL, THERE ARE ABOUT 15 SEPARATE MAJOR PIECES OF HARDWARE AND SEVERAL BOXES OF LOOSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPONENTS, INCLUDING BROKEN FRAGMENTS OF TINTED LUCITE,

CLOTH STRAPS, BOLTTs, LENGTHS OF METAL STRUCTURAL SUPPORTS, ETC.

3. PHOTOBAROGRAPH, ALTHOUGH BADLY DAMAGED, AT LEAST IN ONE PIECE, AND THE CAMERA OBJECTIVE AND MOUNT UNSCRATCHED. FILM FROM PHOTOBAROGRAPH (TWO SPOOLS) SHOWING GUAGE READINGS HAD BEEN RETRIEVED. (FILM HAS BEEN DEVELOPED. WHAS THIS DONE BY BALLOON EQUIPMENT OR BY SOVIETS?)

4. EMBASSY HAS TAKEN POSSESSION OF FILM AND OF TAPE RECORDER AND TAPE. RECORDER NOT IN GOOD CONDITION, BUT TAPE UNSCATHED.

5. DR. DMITRENKO (PARA TWO, REF A) IS ON VACATION AND NOT EXPECTED TO RETURN UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER. IN VIEW OF THIS, EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT ADVISABLE FOR NASA TO SEND SPECIALIST TO MOSCOW TO OVERSEE PREPARATION OF EQUIPMENT FOR SHIPMENT. PLEASE ADVISE. IF NASA SPECIALIST CAN NOT BE SENT, WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING STRUCTURAL DRAWING OF PAYLOAD WITH ALL PARTS LABELED.

6. DOES NASA WANT ALL PARTS COLLECTED TO BE RETURNED, INCLUDING BALLOON, PARACHUTE, LARGE PIECES OF ETHAFOAM, LARGE PIECE OF FLAT METAL MESH, LOOSE CUBICAL METAL FRAME (ABOUT ONE METER EACH SIDE), LUCITE FRAGMENTS, ETC., OR JUST SUBSTANTIVE PIECES OF EQUIPMENT.

7. EMBASSY WILL NOT TAKE POSSESSION OF REMAINDER OF PAYLOAD UNTIL ANSWER TO PARA FIVE ABOVE IS RECEIVED. WE HAVE PROMISED TO TAKE EQUIPMENT OFF HANDS OF SOVIETS SOMETIME NEXT WEEK, IF POSSIBLE.

8. INTERKOSMOS REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ASKED WHETHER ANY DOCUMENTATION OF RE-POSSESSION SHOULD BE SIGNED FOR THE RECORD. ALSO, ALTHOUGH QUESTION WAS NOT RAISED, IS US OBLIGATED TO PAY EXPENSES INCURRED BY SOVIETS IN RECOVERY AND TRANSPORT OF EQUIPMENT? EMBASSY SEEKS ADVICE OF DEPARTMENT ON WHETHER ANY DIPLOMATIC FORMALITIES NEED BE CONCLUDED WITH MFA IN CONNECTION WITH RECOVERY BY SOVIETS OR RE-POSSESSION BY U.S.

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9. SCIATT HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTE FOR SPACE RESEARCH FOR SOVIET ASSISTANCE IN RECOVERING EQUIPMENT AND SAID THAT THIS ASSISTANCE WAS A SIGNIFICANT AND FINE EXAMPLE OF US-USSR BILATERAL SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED AT THE TWO RECENT SUMMIT MEETINGS. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT LETTER OF APPRECIATION FROM NASA ADMINISTRATOR OT PRESIDENT KELDYSH WOULD BE MOST DESIRABLE.

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